

# **Central Coventry Fire District**

## **Board of Directors**

**May 20, 2008 - 7:00 pm**

**Central Coventry Fire Station 4**

### **Work Session**

**1. Call to Order – 7:03 pm**

**2. Roll Call**

**President: Girard Bouchard – VP: Joe Bonn**

**Anna Mae Lapinski - Linda Giguere - Ron Gizzarelli - Elaine Hunt**

**Clerk: Tracy Hall**

**Treasurer: Tom LaColle**

**Chief Seltzer – Asst Chief Tucker**

**Not Present - Robert Crowe, Tax Collector: Jeanne Graemiger**

**3. Presentation of Feasibility of Wood St Site**

**Chief Seltzer gave a power point presentation. There was a short discussion.**

**4. Presentation of Chief's Department Improvement Plan**

**This presentation postponed to a future time.**

**5. Work Session Closed – 7:47 pm**

### **Agenda**

**1. Call to Order – 7:47pm**

**2. Roll Call**

**President: Girard Bouchard – VP: Joe Bonn**

**Anna Mae Lapinski - Linda Giguere - Ron Gizzarelli - Elaine Hunt**

**Clerk: Tracy Hall**

**Treasurer: Tom LaColle**

**Chief Seltzer – Asst Chief Tucker**

**Not Present - Robert Crowe, Tax Collector: Jeanne Graemiger**

**Additional People Present:**

**Lt Gorman, F/F Stevens, Lt Giles, Lt Almagno, F/F Harrington, F/F Preston, F/F Brown**

**3. Approval of Minutes of the previous Board of Directors Meeting – 4/15/08**

**Motion to Approve: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Ron Gizzarelli**

**All Vote Aye**

**4. Old Business**

**Discussion & Approval related to Wood St & Department Improvement Plan**

**Mr. Bouchard began discussion on the Wood St site. Chief Seltzer said he has met with The McGuire Group and received a quote of \$5,400 to provide architectural & engineering services as stated in the information attached. He started with The McGuire Group because they are one of the premiere companies in New England for building**

fire stations. He thought we should probably check around to other companies to compare but he wanted to get an idea how much it was going to cost. This is the next step we would need to take if the Board wants to go forward. Lt Gorman asked if this is what they proposed or what the Chief asked them for. Chief Seltzer replied it was what they had discussed at their meeting and that the people from the McGuire Group had looked at the building. This was the only company he had spoken to. They had come highly recommended from another Fire Chief. Ms. Lapinski said that this sounded as though it was the next step we would need to make a final decision. Chief Seltzer agreed. Mr. Bonn makes a motion to move forward with this process. He asked if we have to seek bids. Chief Seltzer says this company came highly recommended. Mr. LaColle adds that as a member of the Board for the Credit Union when they hire a company to build a branch they look for a company that builds banks. The same idea should apply here. Mr. LaColle asks if the town is ready to go or if they could pull back after we've spent this money? Chief Seltzer replied that the Senior Center is moving. They have federal grant money and plan to be in the Town Hall Annex by fall. The Town may ask for a significant down payment then Lease/Purchase agreement for the rest. Chief Seltzer does not know of any other people interested in the building. The Town has given us 1st rights to the property. Lt Gorman asks if that would hold true even if the Town Council changes in November. Chief Seltzer replies that it is possible for things to change if there is a change in the Town Council. A decision should be made in the June/July time

frame in order to keep the process moving. Mr. Bonn asks when we could have a price from the Town. Chief Seltzer is confident he could have it for the next meeting.

Mr. Bonn restates his motion to hire the McGuire Group.

Seconded: Linda Giguere

All Vote Aye – Mrs. Hunt Abstains

Info on Insurance for Call Personnel – not in yet

## **5. President's Report**

The fundraising event for the Fogarty family was a job well done.

Motion to Approve: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Elaine Hunt

All Vote Aye

## **6. Chief's Report**

Chief Seltzer was at the Statehouse today and the Tax Cap legislation has been defeated in committee and will not go thru this year. It is possible for the Governor to add it as an article to the budget. The Fire Chiefs had a good discussion with the Senate Finance Committee.

Mr. Sprague invited Chief Seltzer to a League of Cities & Towns Meeting to discuss the pension reform bill introduced by Senator Alves. The reform would affect anyone under 10 years of service. It would eliminate the 20 year pension and make it a 25 year pension. Everyone would pay 8%. Those at 9% would come down; those at 7% would go up. There would be a guaranteed COLA of 3%. If you

collect before age 55 you would receive a reduced amount until you reach age 55. This is just the beginning of this legislation it probably won't go thru this year. It also includes reforms for healthcare. No city, town or district would be allowed to provide healthcare before age 55 & then only for 10 years, till age 65. It would also be limited to single or single & spouse. This would supersede any contract or ordinance. At the time of passage it would take effect in the next fiscal year and at the end of any standing contract. It does not affect retirees and also includes a 20% co-pay. This is just the beginning and while it's not going to make it thru this year, it's not going to go away. Mr. Gizzarelli asked how would this affect our employees? Chief Seltzer replied that it would affect about 16 of our employees. Mr. Gizzarelli also asked if it was discussed to do it by attrition so as to not affect anyone currently in the pension system. Chief Seltzer was not sure of the reason for choosing 10 years. This bill has only been out a week and there will be a lot more discussion about it.

### **Personnel – New Hire**

Chief Seltzer has sent someone for pre-employment testing. There are some issues that the Chief is reviewing. No decision regarding hiring this person has been made. If Chief Seltzer is going to recommend this person for hiring he will do so at the June meeting.

Regarding the Administrative Assistant, some of the resumes need to be weeded out. Chief Seltzer has had some trouble getting in touch with Bob Crowe. Elaine Hunt has responded with some ideas.

**The budget is getting tight and since we did not budget for this he suggests we wait for Sept 1 to hire someone unless the Board doesn't mind going over budget. We still need to interview a handful of people and make a final decision.**

**Motion to Approve: Ron Gizzarelli Seconded: Linda Giguere  
All Vote Aye**

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

**Mr. LaColle presented his report. There was money budgeted for an Audit. Mrs. Graemiger was going to contact the person who had done the old Central Coventry before. Mr. LaColle is uncertain what is going on with that but the money has not been spent yet. The new equipment line item is large because of the new vehicles that were bought but not budgeted for. Repairs have been high but are unavoidable. Fuel is expected to be over budget as costs have gone up. Projecting out our overtime, payroll will probably be over budget.**

**There have been a lot of changes in the phone systems, adding the Town Hall Annex, so it will run over budget. In total the budget looks to be \$57,000 over, \$39,000 of that being the new Chief's vehicle & the Dive truck, also the increase in fuel costs. Accounting for those unexpected expenses we would be at our budget. May 15th & August 15th are quarterly payment dates so that should bring in a significant amount of cash. In addition we have 4 months of rescue recovery and some SAFER grant money coming in. We should end up ok.**

**Motion to Approve: Linda Giguere Seconded: Anna Mae Lapinski**

**All Vote Aye**

## **8. Tax Collector's Report**

**The Tax Collector is away on vacation. She provided a report which was presented by Mr. Bouchard.**

**Motion to Approve: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Elaine Hunt**

**All Vote Aye**

## **9. New Business**

### **Backup Person for Payroll**

**Mr. LaColle explained the issue. Money was wired to the payroll company. However the person who should have been checking for it was out. So the person who releases the direct deposits thought there was no money and stopped the deposits. Mr. LaColle was out of town and so was not able to contact the payroll company until Monday. Mr. LaColle suggests Chief Seltzer be the backup person.**

**Mr. Bouchard directs Mr. LaColle and Chief Seltzer to make the necessary arraignments to have both names on the accounts. Mr. Gizzarelli asked how long before the employees received their money.**

**Mr. LaColle replied he issued paper checks on Monday. Chief Seltzer spoke with the Union and assured them if anyone had any charges associated with the lack of direct deposit that the department would reimburse them. Mr. LaColle added that Intuit would reimburse us for any charges as the issue was with them. Mr. Bonn asked if Mr.**

**LaColle was happy with Intuit. He said he was very happy with them.**

**10. Introduction of New Business to be considered at the next Board Meeting - none**

**11. Good & Welfare**

**Mr. Bouchard received a reply from Kent County Water. They attached several pages of information with no explanation as to what it meant. Their letter basically said they were going ahead with the rate increase and anyone was welcome to come to the hearings to voice their opinion. Chief Seltzer received a copy of a letter sent by East Greenwich Fire to the PUC & KCWA. Chief Seltzer added that the letter we sent also went to all of the fire districts in KCWA area. There have been no hearings set.**

**The Local 3372 sent a public records request for copies of contracts & benefits for Chief Seltzer & Asst Chief Tucker. Also the retirement packages for Chief Hoxsie, Chief Bowen & Chief Noonan. They also requested minutes of any meetings where these packages were approved. Mrs. Hall replied back as required by law with an estimate of the costs to retrieve and copy the requested records. There has been no formal answer from the Local. Lt. Gorman commented that he felt the 8 hours quoted for search & retrieval was excessive. He was sure that the documents requested were sitting in a drawer somewhere easily accessible. He feels the numbers are being padded. He has been involved with many open meetings complaints**



an asked for more documents that this and has never seen 8 hours. Chief Seltzer replied we estimated 8 hours because we have no idea how many meeting minutes have to be gone thru. The contract for Chief Seltzer & Assist Chief Tucker are not public record as they are specific to each. A separate document will have to be set up with the information that is public. Mrs. Hall said that there are boxes of records upstairs and filing cabinets downstairs that came from all of the other stations that will have to be gone thru. It's going to take some time to go thru and find the information you want. Ms. Lapinski said for a long period of time we didn't even know who had the records for Tiogue. Ms. Lapinski added when she started with the Tiogue Fire District there were gaps in the records. They tried to contact anyone who might have them and didn't get very far. Mrs. Hall also brought up that this is an estimate. If it only takes 1 hour then the union won't be charged for 8 hours. Ms. Lapinski commented that she felt that padding the estimate was a poor choice of words. Lt Gorman replied that they are not in a position to pay for the setting up of a filing system. Records should be readily available.

Chief Seltzer replied that some of the records requested were from Tiogue Fire District not the Central Coventry Fire District and it's going to take some time to get them. Mr. Gizzarelli brought up putting the requested records together then telling them how much. Mr. Bouchard replied that we don't put the work into gathering the records without an agreement first. Mrs. Hall added that the procedure is to respond with an estimate then wait for an answer back. Lt Gorman responded that he doesn't mind paying a

reasonable fee but this is not reasonable. He also doesn't think the Attorney General will think that he should be paying 8 hours for us to find our files. Mr. Bouchard closes the discussion by saying we will take Lt Gorman's comments under advisement and will wait for the formal response and charge according to how long the retrieval takes.

There was a thank you letter for Marshall Godin for a fire safety/smoke detector talk he did at the Sherwood Valley Mobile Home Park.

Mrs. Hunt had some comments regarding the administrative assistant position. We spent hundreds of dollars on an ad that generated a lot of responses that we have not acknowledged. By the time we get around to it the responses will be out dated, people will have found other jobs or will not be interested anymore. If we are concerned about the budget issues, we just spent money that is a moot point now. Mr. Bouchard does not feel that it is a moot point and assured Mrs. Hunt we will be taking action on it.

Mr. Gizzarelli pointed out that the meeting was still not listed in the Kent County Times. Mrs. Hall replied that she had spoken to the editor about where to find the meetings on the secretary of State's website and was told it would be in for the next meeting. Mr. Bouchard replied that we are posting all of our meetings as required. We cannot control whether other people pick it up. There was some

**additional discussion. Chief Seltzer suggested we post the meetings at the Town Hall as well.**

**12. Adjournment – 8:58 pm**

**Motion to Adjourn: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Linda Giguere**

**All Vote Aye**